



Kid Builders Implementation Guidelines

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Summary

The Kid Builders activity books are designed to strengthen families with children ages 0 – 5 by helping them experience developmental activities with their child, complete key health and safety milestones, and access resources in their community. The activities are described and illustrated in a two-binder set for parents and caregivers of young children.

Benefits

- Kid Builders is a cost effective approach to helping very young children with health, safety, and developmental growth.
- Kid Builder activities are easy to do and fun.
- The activities use common household items or inexpensive and easy to access supplies.
- Activities are written to reach a broad spectrum of parents of young children, regardless of age, ethnicity, education or income.
- Kid Builder activities are flexible:
 - Parents or caregivers can do the activities exactly as written, modify activities to meet their environment, or be inspired to create their own similar activities.
 - Agencies can tailor activities and distribution/instructional method to their programs.
- Activities promote positive parenting skills.

Intended Use

Kid Builders was developed by a team of health, education, developmental, and safety experts with a focus on preparing children to be healthy and ready to learn when they enter school. The binders can be used either one-on-one or in a classroom setting to benefit children. The activities are specifically designed for children ages 0 to 5 years old, and are grouped by age so that the activities fit the developmental level of the child.

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All use of Kid Builder materials should include reference to the Children and Families Commission of Orange County. Use of Kid Builder graphics separately from related activities is not permitted.

Best Practices & Effective Distribution

A pilot program was conducted to test the Kid Builder materials. Over 1,000 parents who received the Kid Builders books in a preliminary release completed a telephone survey in the language of their choice about their experiences with the books after they had had sufficient time to put them to use. The books, which were printed in both English and Spanish, were distributed with the cooperation of many agencies located throughout Orange County using three different instructional methods: a simple handoff; classroom type instruction; and one-on-one instruction.

The implementation and evaluation of the pilot program resulted in the following findings, offered here to encourage the most effective use of the binders and activities.

Among the parents who volunteered to be surveyed, 82% engaged their children in the books' activities, and parents reported very high opinions of the books. ***Although all types of instruction resulted in fairly high usage of the book, the lowest usage level was associated with light instruction. The moderate and extensive methods resulted in greater use of the books.***

Both statistical and qualitative data suggested that ***higher income parents may need to be convinced in advance*** that they can benefit from what Kid Builders has to offer.

Agencies distributing the binders found ***there is no "one-size-fits-all" approach to implementing Kid Builders*** in their particular community and program. Rather, they created their own unique use of the materials. In some cases, organizations incorporated Kid Builders into their existing programs such as parent education classes, "mommy and me" programs, or home visitation services. In other cases, agencies created new programs or projects built specifically around the Kid Builder activities.

Consider the best timing for distributing Kid Builder materials in your program. Binders should be ***given by a trusted source and person of authority*** and at a time ***when parents/caregivers are receptive*** (not overwhelmed with other information, not rushing, etc).

Be sure to ***include program administrators and staff leaders*** when incorporating Kid Builder materials into existing programs, to encourage acceptance and accountability.



Ideas for Implementing Kid Builders in Your Community

This is a partial listing of ways in which Kid Builders materials have been successfully used through a variety of programs and by a wide range of service providers, intended simply to spark your imagination.

- One-on-one explanation by parent educator or preschool teacher
- Parenting classes
- Home visits by service providers
- Parent-teacher conferences (preschool/kindergarten) highlighting specific activities for parents to do to support a child's "next steps"
- Formal babysitter trainings
- Ideas for nannies, grandparents
- Ideas for home care providers
- In-class activities during parent-child time
- Daily activity posted on parent bulletin board
- Newsletters
- Family Resource Centers
- At clinics, physicians give the books to parents during a visit, highlighting areas of interest/importance.
- At hospitals monthly Newborn celebration class (returning parents after child is born).
- Welcome Baby home visitation programs.
- Library ESL programs in one-to-one and small group tutoring sessions.
- Library family literacy programs and toddler story times.

Questions, Comments, or Help

If you have questions or comments regarding the use of Kid Builder materials, or need additional help related to implementing Kid Builder activities in your community, please email lisa@lisajburke.com or call 949-631-1741.